

VZCZCXYZ0017
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUCNDT #0683/01 0942000
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 042000Z APR 06
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8570

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000683

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KUNR](#) [SU](#) [IS](#) [KPKO](#) [UN](#)

SUBJECT: HIRC MEETING WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL ANNAN, MARCH 27

¶1. Summary. Chairman Hyde and a Congressional Delegation from the House International Relations Committee (HIRC) met with Secretary-General Kofi Annan and senior members of his staff at the UN on March 27. End Summary.

¶2. Chairman Hyde told Secretary-General Annan that the UN was at an historic moment in its history. Committee members were in New York to listen to views and advocate for meaningful reform. While Committee members "may not agree on how to get there," the Chairman said, "UN reform is something we all agree on." He emphasized that reform needs leadership and that the UN needs to restore its "confidence and direction" in order to live up to its potential to alleviate strife and turmoil around the world. Congressman Lantos added his personal appreciation for the Secretary-General's leadership.

Annan describes reform efforts

¶3. The Secretary-General responded that the UN was "in the throes of reform." He noted that the debate on the Human Rights Council had occupied a great deal of attention and he expressed appreciation for the U.S.'s "constructive attitude." Annan stressed that it was inconceivable for the UN to be able to strengthen its human rights mechanism without active U.S. participation. "As a country, you've done more for human rights around the world than anyone else." Annan noted that while he had hoped for a two-thirds election threshold, the requirement for an absolute majority and the end of "automatic admission from regional groups" should keep the worst actors off. He said that it was important for the U.S. to be involved and "hopefully" on the Council in its first year as it sets the agenda.

¶4. Annan briefly described other key reform efforts, noting that the Peacebuilding Commission had been created to take a longer view of countries coming out of reform and hopefully forestall a return to violence. He said the Central Revolving Fund would allow the UN to react more efficiently to natural disasters. The agreement on language on "Responsibility to Protect" in the outcome document was an "important breakthrough for an organization that has insisted on sovereignty for all these years." He said that the management reforms before the GA would provide the organization needed managerial flexibility and the upcoming mandate review would allow the entire membership to "review our priorities."

HIRC Members press on reform,
Darfur and anti-Israel resolutions

¶5. Congressman Ackerman noted that the UN continues to waste large amounts of time and energy passing repetitive resolutions that attack Israel. SYG Annan responded that the various Palestinian Committees would be a part of the programs that member states would have to address through the mandate review process. He also noted that the issue has

been a focus of the actions of the previous Commission on Human Rights.

¶6. Congressman Smith asked the SYG to address the ongoing violence in Darfur and the problem of gender selection in China and India, which, he noted, had led to one hundred million "missing girls" in China. SYG Annan said the situation in Darfur "continues to be unacceptable." He noted that the African Union (AU) was pushing the parties to a ceasefire, but that we needed the Sudanese Government and rebels to reach a political agreement in Abuja. Annan noted that there were difficulties on both parties to the negotiations, including with disorganization among the rebel groups. The AU had taken the decision on "rehatting" but the Sudanese Government was very reluctant to accept a UN force. While "puzzled" by Khartoum's reaction, Annan was confident that it would be worked out. The transition, he said, would take "six months or so" and it was important that there was no gap between the AU and the UN. Annan made a pitch for logistical and financial support for the AU forces now.

¶7. On the issue of family planning and gender selection, Annan noted that it was a subject the UN has been discussing with the Chinese and Indian governments, though he called it a "difficult situation." He said that the governments in question are "beginning to understand the problem" that will result from lopsided gender imbalances in their populations, but "we need to help them" understand the gravity of the situation. The SYG used the opportunity to reiterate the UN's "zero tolerance" policy on sexual abuse and exploitation, noting that he had just returned from the Congo.

¶8. Congressman Payne said that he hoped the U.S. would participate in the Human Rights Council, noting that he was glad the worst abusers could "no longer be protected by the regional groups." He asked Annan about problems related to revenue sharing as part of the North/South Agreement in Sudan and about the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Annan responded that transparency regarding proceeds from oil revenues made revenue sharing a difficult problem. On the LRA, Annan said that UN forces in Eastern Congo needed better intelligence sharing in order to "decapitate" the LRA leadership.

¶9. Congressman Burton noted reports that members of Annan's staff had shredded documents related to the Oil for Food investigation and asked whether the UN had taken disciplinary action. Annan responded by defending the UN's willingness to open itself to an independent investigation. "We set up the Volcker Commission." Annan claimed the real scandal was with those companies who did deals and paid kickbacks to Saddam. On the specific charge of shredding documents, Annan said that individual in question was following UN rules of procedure and that the documents in question were copies whose destruction "did not impede the work" of the Commission. "When people break the laws here, we punish them."

¶10. The delegation did not have the opportunity to clear this message prior to their departure from New York.

¶11. Participants:

HIRC:

Chairman Henry Hyde
Congressman Tom Lantos
Congressman Chris Smith
Congressman Gary Ackerman
Congressman Dan Burton
Congressman Eni Faleomavaega
Congressman Donald Payne
Congressman William Delahunt

UN:

Secretary-General Annan

SIPDIS

Chief of Staff Mark Malloch-Brown
Deputy Chief of Staff Alicia Barcena

